

Central Intelligence Agency



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### Sino-Indian Border Tensions

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**Beijing's establishment of a forward base on disputed territory along the Tibetan border with India last summer has precipitated the first significant military tension between China and India in 10 years:**

- Although no fighting has occurred, in November relations deteriorated to the point that Chinese forces in Tibet assumed a heightened state of readiness.
- Tensions have probably eased since November, but Chinese and Indian outposts are still within 1 kilometer of each other, and the danger of isolated skirmishes remains.
- In the immediate area under dispute, Chinese forces are outnumbered 10 to one.

**The Chinese made at least three demarches to New Delhi concerning incursions and military buildups along the border in late 1986:**

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**We believe Beijing sees the border dispute as a purely bilateral issue. The Chinese have not tried to exploit the situation to press New Delhi during heightened tensions between Pakistan and India:**

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**If the current stalemate persists and no diplomatic progress is made toward assuaging Chinese concerns that New Delhi is attempting to impose its own border demarcation by force and legislation, we believe Beijing will probably back up its demarches with a buildup of forces this spring:**

- We believe the Chinese may deploy fighter aircraft to Tibet to counter future Indian air incursions.

**The Indians are not likely to press their advantage against Chinese forces. New Delhi will probably encourage Beijing to forgo further military moves in the disputed area and to schedule the eighth round of border talks:**

- No dates for the eighth round of border talks have been set, but the Chinese have indicated that they would prefer to wait until after the summer for a meeting in New Delhi.
- The Chinese may be trying to stall the talks to keep their options on the border open.



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